import/export requirements. Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures etc. should take up educating producers through IT to enable them to enhance their income. For this purpose, they should develop their own websites/portals, which are freely accessible to farmers through village level IT kiosks. The participants however agreed unanimously that unless marketing extension enhances farmers net income, it will have no takers.

17. Many of the existing marketing extension information and knowledge, for example, lowest-highest prices, arrivals of produce and markets etc. are not readily usable by farmers for decision making. There is a need for a mechanism to translate such information in a user-friendly form for the benefit of farmers.

18. Apex R&D institutions in food and agricultural marketing should come together to develop farmer friendly contents for dissemination.

19. Agriculture being the backbone of economy in developing countries, infrastructure *viz* power, internet connectivity, teledensity, cheaper IT technologies etc. should be addressed by the Governments on priority for upliftment of farmers and rural people.

20. AFMA should consider launching its own website indicating good agricultural practices including post harvest practices based on feedback from all member countries to promote food and agricultural marketing.

Assistance to Himachal Pradesh

† 612. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount provided under different schemes to Himachal Pradesh during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether the fund was utilized for the same purpose by the State Government for which it was granted; and

(c) if so, the extent thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) A sum or Rs. 15 lakhs was sanctioned from the Consumer Welfare

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Fund to Himachal Pradesh for upgrading the secondary Standard Laboratory by supplying one set of digital electronic Secondary Standard balance in 2004-05. Further, assistance in the form of Computers, Printers and accessories valued approximately at Rs. 1,58,132/- was provided in 2004-05 for strengthening infrastructural facilities of the Price Monitoring Cell in the State Government.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The assistance provided was fully utilized for the purpose for which it was granted.

Import of oils

†613. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI. Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether import of oils such as palm and soyabean is affecting production and marketing of other oils;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard;

(c) whether a proposal for imposing duty on their import is pending; and

(d) if so, action being taken with regard to this proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Since there has been a continuous excess of demand over domestic supply of edible oils, import of edible oils has been resorted to for more than two decades to make this item of mass consumption easily available to comsumers at reasonable prices. The details regarding production and import of edible oils including palm oil and soyabean oil in the country during the last three years are as under:—

(in lakh tonnes)

Year	Production of oilseeds	Net availability/production of edible oils from all domestic sources	Import of edible oils
2002-2003	148.38	46.64	43.65
2003-2004	252.90	71.64	52.95
2004-2005	261.03 (Estimated)	76.98 (Estimated)	45.42 (Estimated)

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.